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## EDITORIAL NOTE

**Our Enemy: Prussianism.** The Prussian is still alive and vigorous behind the firing line, even while men on both sides of the line are dying for the sake of something finer and higher. To find him, vigorous and active, we have only to consult the columns of a recent issue of the official Berlin *Lokal Anzeiger*, where we find the following statement by Dr. Walter Rathenau, chairman of the largest electrical manufacturing company in Germany:

We began the war a year too soon. When we have secured a German peace we must begin at once a reorganization upon a broader and firmer basis than ever before. Establishments that produce raw material essential to the army must not only continue their work, but enter into it upon lines of increased energy, forming thus a kernel of economic Germany in preparing in the economic sense for the next war. We must carefully calculate in advance, in view of lessons learned in this war, what our country lacks in raw material or essentials of raw materials, and secure immense reserves to remain unused until a day in the future.

We must organize as genuine an industrial mobilization as we had a military mobilization. Every technician or semi-technician, enrolled or not in the list of mobilized force, must be empowered through official credentials to take charge and direction of a great establishment upon the second day following a new declaration of war. Every establishment manufacturing for commercial purposes must be mobilized also, and understand officially that upon the third day after declaration of war its entire abilities are to be devoted to serving the army upon demand.

Such statements as this demand thoughtful attention from every one who, in whatever way, is fighting our common enemy, which, for convenience sake, though perhaps not with entire adequacy, has been termed "Prussianism."

We are engaged in a war, and our service in that war should be uppermost in our thoughts; but the one fact that deserves our closest thought and attention is that in this war we are seeking for peace. Victory will not bring of its own accord a universal peace. This can neither be said too often nor too strongly insisted upon. Victory is only a step toward a governed world and a universal peace. It is the removal of an obstacle that prevents our laying down the foundations of that peace. That obstacle is Prussianism. Prussianism is our enemy in the sense that a boulder or stump is the enemy of one who would cultivate his fields for the benefit of his fellow-men. The fields of peace are the civilized countries of the world. To remove from one or two of these countries the obstacle to peace, only to permit it to remain in other countries, is as futile a thing as any people can engage in. The organization, the military activities, the concentration upon war aims so urgent upon us today, are, it must be remembered, in themselves temporary activities only, and, when otherwise maintained, then for the purpose for which they are now employed, absolutely antagonistic to peace. If we can

continue these activities, and enlarge them with this thought clearly in mind, we may perhaps come nearer to that which we are all seeking. Upon the strength of this purpose depends our hope. This constitutes an obligation that rests upon all of us alike, every moment of every day that the war lasts.

## THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1828.

## The Eighty-ninth Annual Report of the Directors

Presented at the Annual Meeting in Washington, D. C., May 19, 1917

## STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE DIRECTORS

*The Gradual Rise of a Constructive Pacifism*

THE American Peace Society enters upon its 90th year with greater opportunities and with larger promise of usefulness than ever before in its history. In the great forward movement of humanity which has marked the span of its life it has borne an honorable and sometimes a distinguished part. When the history of the decline and fall of the war system comes to be written, it will not fail to record that our Society in 1837, and again in 1838 and 1839, secured from the Congress of the United States serious consideration of a proposal for the establishment of a permanent international tribunal for the avoidance of war, and that in 1840 the president of our Society, William Ladd, published his epoch-making "Essay on a Congress of Nations." Neither will the historian of the period fail to note the contribution made by the Society, not only through its eminent leaders like William Ladd, Elihu Burritt, William Jay, Charles Sumner, and Benjamin F. Trueblood, but also by the host of undistinguished but devoted souls that it inspired, to the education of the American people in the principles of international goodwill. Surely we may claim for our Society some part of the credit for the unexampled spirit of patient forbearance with which our people have sustained the President in his persistent efforts to protect our citizens and conserve the rights of neutrals and of humanity without resort to war. And now that the war system, to whose destruction we are pledged, has involved us also in its evil web, we have the proud assurance that, on our part at least, the struggle will be waged for no meaner end than the establishment of a new international order on the foundations laid three-quarters of a century ago by the founder of the American Peace Society.

But with all its record of achievement and its prophetic vision of a better world system, our Society must bear its share of responsibility for the demonstrated ineffectiveness of the peace movement in general, and thus for the discredit into which that movement has fallen. This is doubtless due to the fact that, in this country as well as in Europe, the propaganda for international peace has been too exclusively critical and obstructive, rather than creative and constructive. It has denounced the